

judges and vote on them at one time later on, as was done to us when we were in the minority; but we have decided not to do that. As soon as they are ready, we are moving them forward. The record is replete with the case we have made, indicating that we are doing the very best we can under very difficult circumstances.

There is no need to belabor the point, other than to say we took control of the Senate in June. During the first 6 months of this session, there was not a single confirmation hearing held, not a single one, which is in keeping with what has gone on in the past.

In the past, for example, in the 6½ years the Republicans chaired the Judiciary Committee, from 1995 to 2001—34 months; that is almost 3 years—during that period of time, they held no confirmation hearings for judicial nominations and for 30 months they held a single confirmation hearing.

So we are moving forward. We have six office buildings—three in the House, three in the Senate—closed down. Staff is having a very difficult time working, as has been laid out in this Chamber on a number of occasions.

Senator LEAHY, in spite of that, held an emergency meeting in the President's Room in the Capitol. They went to the Appropriations meeting room and held a hearing there on judges. He reported out of the President's Room these four judges we are going to vote on today.

I have to say, if this case were being tried by a jury, the jury would be out 5 minutes and we would win. This is a case where if this were given to a jury, we would win easily. The jury is the American people. We are going to win this. We are doing the right thing. We are moving the judges as quickly as we can. In spite of the September 11 terrorism attack and the anthrax attack, we are still moving the judges as quickly as we can.

What is being done by the minority is they are holding up appropriations bills. We are going to vote again on a motion to proceed to this foreign operations appropriations bill.

Just 8 days ago, the entire Republican side voted to block consideration of the foreign operations appropriations bill, which funds U.S. foreign policy. It was not because they disagree with what is in the bill supposedly, since it was written by Senator LEAHY and Senator MCCONNELL. These two Senators worked on this bill. Supposedly, it is a bipartisan bill which responds to the concerns and interests of both Democrats and Republicans, as well as the President's foreign policy priorities.

No, the Republican leadership did not oppose the bill itself. Instead, they said it was because of the Judiciary Committee which Senator LEAHY chairs. They say they have not acted quickly enough on judicial nominations. That is a very serious accusation.

I have been a prosecutor, and I have defended lots of people charged with

crimes—not so serious crimes and really serious crimes, such as murder. So I take seriously our responsibility of the Federal judiciary. In fact, after reporting out four more judges last Thursday, we have acted three times as fast in approving nominees as was done during the first 9½ months of the first Bush administration or the Clinton administration.

Today we are going with the unanimous consent agreement that has been entered. We are going to confirm four more judges. For the minority to suggest we are moving too slowly is a bit, I guess, like the orphan accused of killing his parents and who then begs for the court's mercy because he is an orphan.

When the Republicans controlled the Senate during the Clinton administration, they created many of the judicial vacancies they are complaining about today, as has been indicated by the Senator from Alabama.

Some of President Clinton's nominees languished for years. Many qualified nominees, because of the impact this had on their ability to lead normal lives, withdrew. They withdrew from their law practices, waiting for a hearing, waiting to be confirmed. They withdrew their names after waiting years. Some of them said: We cannot wait any longer. They did not want to subject their families to further unfairness.

We know about all this. We know that. We are not going to be unfair. We have a record that indicates maybe it should be payback time, but it is not. We are not going to treat the Republicans as they treated us. That is already evidenced by what has been done.

Some on the other side might fear that they are going to be treated as we were treated, but that is not the case. The fact is, since July when the Senate control shifted, the Democratic Senate has treated and will treat Republican nominees fairly. I repeat, we have no intention of perpetuating the shameful ways the Republicans treated President Clinton's nominees. We have and we will consider these nominees fairly and act on them in a timely way.

Maybe some Republican Senators believe the public will not know or care that they have taken the bill that funds U.S. foreign interests as hostage. That is their hostage this week—and last week.

I was happy to see the senior Senator from Alaska—the former chairman of the committee, now the ranking member of the committee—vote “present.” It appears quite clearly that he does not like what is going on, as indicated in his statements he made afterwards.

We are in a time of war, and we are going to have a continuing resolution—meaning that every line in that continuing resolution will have to be reviewed by some lawyer to find out if it is more than was done the preceding year. It does not sound as though that is the right way to go.

The American people deserve to know what is at stake when the Senate

is kept from acting on this bill, especially when it is clearer than ever that our security is linked to events outside our borders—and then for people on the other side to stand and say, let them go a little more quickly than they did and we will work something out.

As of next week, there will be 3 weeks left until Thanksgiving. We are running out of time to do things. This foreign operations appropriations bill, as bipartisan as it is, will have amendments offered on it. We cannot whip through this bill in a matter of a couple hours. Agriculture appropriations—the same thing. They are holding up the work of the country.

What does this bill contain? We have talked in generalities, and I talked a little bit specifically earlier today, but let's talk about what is in this bill.

We have three countries that have really been good to America in recent years—Egypt, Jordan, and Israel—but they need our help. These are countries that depend on our assistance. And these are not gifts. We do not write them out a check and throw them money and say, spend it any way you want. Most of the money goes for them to purchase American products. That is what foreign aid is about in modern-day America.

So not only does it hurt those countries that are not getting this money, these vouchers, these opportunities to buy American products; it is hurting American companies. Who are these countries? Israel, Egypt, and Jordan, allies that are crucial to the stability of the Middle East.

I read an interview last night of President Mubarak. It was very impressive. It was in Newsweek magazine—a question—and then his answer. I was so impressed, among other things, when they asked him about Arafat.

He specifically said: Arafat has bad people around him. He mentioned a person's name. This is a gutsy guy. I was impressed. We know he has criticized Israel. He did in this same Newsweek article, when questioned. He said that President Sharon has made promises to him and he hasn't kept them. But Mubarak has been good for America. We are holding up money going to Egypt.

A couple weeks ago I had the pleasure of meeting just a few feet from here with the King of Jordan, King Abdallah I, of course, cared a lot about his father. I liked his father a great deal. This young man has assumed the leadership of his country in very tough times. The majority of the people in Jordan are Palestinians. He is an American ally. His country is favorably disposed to America. It is a country that has made great progress but still has a long way to go. They are dependent upon our helping them. This bill is being held up.

Sure, we can, as Chairman BYRD said, write an omnibus bill and lump it all in and maybe they will get some of what they need. This bill was worked on for